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(71) Applicants (for all designated States except US): THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA represented by THE SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES [US/US]; The National Institutes of Health, Office of Technology Transfer, Suite 325, 6011 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20852 (US). THERION BIOLOGICS CORPORATION [US/US]; 76 Rogers Street, Cambridge, MA 02142 (US).		Published With international search report. Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.	
(72) Inventors; and (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): SCHLOM, Jeffrey [US/US]; 10301 Sorrel Avenue, Potomac, MD 20854 (US). HODGE, James [US/US]; 19030 Montgomery Village			

(54) Title: A RECOMBINANT VECTOR EXPRESSING MULTIPLE COSTIMULATORY MOLECULES AND USES THEREOF

## (57) Abstract

The present invention is a recombinant vector encoding and expressing at least three or more costimulatory molecules. The recombinant vector may additionally contain a gene encoding one or more target antigens or immunological epitope thereof. The synergistic effect of these costimulatory molecules on the enhanced activation of T cells is demonstrated. The degree of T-cell activation using recombinant vectors containing genes encoding three costimulatory molecules was far greater than the sum of recombinant vector constructs containing one costimulatory molecule and greater than the use of two costimulatory molecules. Results employing the triple costimulatory vectors were most dramatic under conditions of either low levels of first signal or low stimulator to T-cell ratios. This phenomenon was observed with both isolated CD4<sup>+</sup> and CD8<sup>+</sup> T cells. The recombinant vectors of the present invention are useful as immunogenes and vaccines against cancer and pathogenic micro-organisms, and in providing host cells, including dendritic cells and splenocytes with enhanced antigen-presenting functions.

